

**PHOENIX BUSINESS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
INSTILL HOPE STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

**August 28, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

Members Present:

Daniel Barajas

Christian Bearden

Karen Carter

Ginger Lane

Jason Schaffner

Sam Wolo

Members Absent:

Lorraine Field

Public Attendees:

Deb Furlong

LaSetta Hogans

Hayden Maynard

Jovanna Parkhouse

Demitria Robles

Rebecca Tierney

Brenda Urquidi

Action items taken are noted in **bold** print.

1) Call to Order / Roll Call/Introductions:

The Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board (Board) Instill Hope Steering Committee (IHSC) Chair Karen Carter called the August 28, 2025, meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Roll call was completed, and there was a quorum of five members.

IHSC Chair Karen Carter invited the committee members to introduce themselves.

2) Approval of the June 26, 2025 IHSC Meeting Minutes:

IHSC Member Christian Bearden motioned to approve the June 26, 2025 IHSC Meeting Minutes with the recommended changes, IHSC Member Sam Wolo seconded the motion.

Approved: Daniel Barajas, Karen Carter, and Jason Schaffner

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Motion passed unanimously

Ginger Lane joined the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

3) Phoenix Workforce Coalition Update:

IHSC Karen Carter took items out of order.

ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Business and Program Manager Deb Furlong shared an update about the Phoenix Workforce Coalition, a Board-led community of practice initiative that the IHSC supports. Deb shared that in 2022, the City of Phoenix won the Bloomberg Philanthropies Global Mayor's Challenge. That recognition came with technical support from Bloomberg Associates consultants in economic and workforce development initiatives. While developing an implementation plan for the 2023-26 Board Strategic Plan, the idea for the community of practice to support Board strategies was developed.

The Phoenix Workforce Coalition serves as a central body that regularly brings together workforce development and training providers. The objectives are to:

- Define landscape: Clearly define the current provider landscape of providers by mapping offerings, populations served, and outcomes.
- Ensure employer alignment: Ensure programs are aligned with local employer demand, using real-time labor market data and direct employer feedback.
- Deliver robust pipeline: Build a robust pipeline of talent that meets the needs of in-demand occupations.
- Develop new programs: Design and deliver employer-informed training programs that directly respond to industry needs.
- Address provider needs: Address provider needs by sharing best practices, identifying gaps, and creating solutions with wraparound supports for residents.
- Improve outcomes: Promote economic mobility and open access to Phoenix's high-quality, in-demand jobs.

Four events were hosted in 2024, including:

- February 2024: Community of Practice/Phoenix Workforce Coalition launch; labor market information
- May 2024: Employer panels to share industry insights
- July 2024: Good Jobs presentation and provider networking
- September 2024: Soft Skills & Good Jobs

One event has been hosted in 2025, with two additional events planned for the rest of the year:

- June 2025: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Semiconductor, and Rapid Response

- September 2025: Provider training for how to help participants use AI
- October 2025: Demystifying the semiconductor sector

Board Executive Director LaSetta Hogans shared that if the committee has any thoughts or ideas for future events, that they should feel free to share any ideas they have. IHSC Member Daniel Barajas shared the Maricopa Community Colleges had received an AI-focused award used to develop AI pathways in partnership with other community colleges across the country. He shared they are also working with Intel to develop no-cost AI curriculum and to show how AI can affect all industries. He recommended that members of the committee review the executive order related to AI and apprenticeships. He shared that at a workforce summit he attended, there was an emphasis placed on generative AI and how it will affect future work and that employers will start requiring that employees have at least a basic understanding of AI.

IHSC Member Ginger Lane shared she is concerned with job loss due to the implementation of AI. IHSC Vice-Chair Jason Schaffner said that AI can help small businesses in the entertainment sector when it comes to infrastructure. IHSC Sam Wolo shared that the City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development Department had developed a report regarding how many jobs may be lost due to AI and it was shared at a Phoenix Workforce Coalition meeting.

Jason shared that there needed to be honest dialogue about AI and the potential effects and that industry needed to get used to AI being implemented. IHSC Member Christian Bearden remarked that there are 12 data centers slated to be build in Arizona, which would take three times the power Arizona generates on the hottest days.

LaSetta shared that the National Model for Mobility Steering Committee is working on career paths and there is a focus on AI and how it affects jobseekers. The Board can serve as an information source for AI and how it affects the economy and jobseekers. Daniel suggested that the IHSC consider developing an online repository where people can read papers and presentations about how AI will affect the labor market to help alleviate some of the fear of AI.

4) Board Strategic Plan/Tracker Overview

IHSC Chair Karen Carter shared that during the August Executive Leadership Committee meeting, Board leadership shared a strategic plan tracker that will serve as a visual tool to gauge progress toward accomplishing the goals and strategies in the Board 2023-26 Strategic Plan, as the Board enters the final year of the plan. The IHSC reviewed the items that they support.

Board Executive Director shared that the IHSC members could find the tracker on Govenda and reviewed the items that the IHSC considered moving forward

to support strategies. She shared that the actions suggested are at the discretion of the Board and if there is anything members want to take off of the plan or move to the next strategic plan, they are welcome to.

Karen asked if there was any concern regarding strategy 3.3 “Foster diversity, equity, belonging, and culture for individuals, businesses, and communities as primary value builders for the City,” given executive orders regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. LaSetta shared that the state has not given any direction to stop diversity and equity initiatives.

Karen suggested the committee continue speaking about the tracker at a future meeting so they can discuss how to ensure the committee meets its goals.

Daniel Barajas left the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

5) Future Agenda Items:

- Strategic Plan/Plan Tracker
- Artificial Intelligence
- Marketing/Social Media Plan

7) Call the Public/Open Discussion:

None.

8) Adjournment:

IHSC Chair Karen Carter adjourned the meeting at **10:03 a.m.**